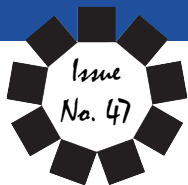


ABAG  
May/June 2000



# Service Matters

## SPRING 2000 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ENDORSES BOLD ACTIONS TO PROMOTE SMART GROWTH

An incredible confluence of events coincided at the ABAG Spring 2000 General Assembly, "Smart Growth: Moving from Rhetoric to Reality" held in San Francisco. The conference theme was underscored again and again throughout the April 27 and 28 event, beginning with a dynamic presentation by new urbanist Peter Calthorpe about "Envision Utah," a visioning exercise that is empowering local governments in the Salt Lake City area to make decisions that will help their region grow smarter.

But what is smart growth? A copy of ABAG's newly released *Theory in Action: Smart Growth Case Studies in the San Francisco Bay Area and Around the Nation*, (profiled in the March-April 2000 issue of *Service Matters*) was given to each person who attended the General Assembly. The report defines "smart growth" as development that revitalizes central cities and older suburbs, supports and enhances public transit and preserves open spaces and agricultural lands. Smart growth is not "no growth;" rather it creates communities that are more livable by developing efficiently within the already built environment.

Following Peter Calthorpe, the Environmental Protection Agency's Public Affairs Director Jim Sayer announced that Congress has awarded a \$180,000 grant to begin work on a regional smart growth strategy for the Bay Area. The grant calls for ABAG to work with local governments and other regional agencies to better integrate transportation and land use planning to support a more compact growth pattern in the region, along the lines of the *Compact for a Sustainable Bay Area*, the theme of the ABAG Spring 1999 General Assembly. The Alliance for Sustainable Development, the Transportation/Land Use Coalition, the Bay Area Council, Sierra Club and Urban Habitat are also important partners in this endeavor.

In a strong demonstration of regional unity, Contra Costa Supervisor Mark DeSaulnier, who serves on the boards of ABAG, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, announced that the three agencies are already meeting to define the coordinating and financing role they can play in helping local governments define how our region can grow smarter.

A provocative luncheon keynote speech by author James Kunstler was the subject of much discussion by conference attendees, especially in his reference to current land use patterns as "the national automotive slum." Day one continued with four panels of experts who discussed ways to become smarter about how the region can grow, overcome public opposition to higher densities, boost the supply of workforce housing, and modify the state tax system to support smart growth. These panels showcased examples of smart growth programs that are already in place and successfully affecting local land use patterns in the Bay Area. The last panel explored pending legislation aimed at reversing what is commonly referred to as

*continued on page 2*

### IN THIS ISSUE

ABAG General Assembly	page 1/2
JARPA Permitting Process	page 3/4
Task Force on Dioxins	pages 4
Bay Trail Project funding	page 5
Census News	page 6
Legislation Update	page 7
Calendar	page 8

*Service Matters is a publication of the Association of Bay Area Governments,  
the planning and services agency for the San Francisco Bay Area's 9 counties and 101 cities.*

aimed at reversing what is known as the “fiscalization of land use” by modifying the state tax structure.

On day two, a diverse panel of media reporters from across the Bay Area gave their perspectives of the region’s current growth patterns. Despite local governments’ need to make land use decisions based on their own city’s needs, the general consensus among the reporters was that these decisions, together, are resulting in an overall degradation in the region’s quality of life.

The Urban Land Institute, cosponsor of the General Assembly, announced that they had recently convened 30 leaders from throughout the Bay Area for a Regional Leadership Forum on Smart Growth. The group, which includes local government officials, leaders of business, environmental and social equity groups, developers and members of the design profession, reached agreement on ten top-priority actions that must be taken by state and local governments and regional agencies to address critical growth challenges.

The group’s impressive list begins with “develop a regional smart growth strategy,” repeating the message that permeated the conference. Other critical first steps, according to the ULI group, include:

- Linking urban growth boundaries with policies and incentives for new housing within the boundaries;
- Reforming the state tax structure to shift local government reliance from sales tax to property tax;
- Reforming the housing needs determination process to reflect smart growth principles;
- Creating new state funds for housing and rewards for local government smart growth behavior.

Conference attendees discussed the ULI’s recommendations and considered how ABAG can help local and state governments implement them. The ABAG Executive Board will consider the ULI recommendations at their May 18th meeting.

*To view the summary report and a graphic recording of this discussion, please visit our website:  
<http://www.abag.ca.gov/abag/events/ga>.*

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## JARPA SIMPLIFIES HOME IMPROVEMENT PERMITTING PROCESS

### PROCESS ALSO PROVIDES IMPROVED ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

As homeowners know, the process of improving their home or property may involve permitting from the local building, zoning and fire department. If the improvement is on property adjacent to a California waterbody (coast, creek or wetland), the homeowner's permitting process involves regional, state and federal agencies with mandates to protect aquatic resources.

The Bay Area Joint Aquatic Resources Permit Application (JARPA) Form is designed to reduce this homeowner's confusion. The JARPA form addresses the environmental concerns that regional, state and federal agencies review in order to issue permits. It is 14 pages long — roughly the same length and level of complexity of several agency applications and replaces the challenge of filling out these multiple applications with a single form. Clear, precise instructions have also been developed to guide the applicant through the questions on the form.

Use of the JARPA form will help provide improved environmental protection. Each agency will receive the same project information on which to base permitting decisions. Agencies will also be aware of which other agencies are reviewing the form and agency staff will be better able to coordinate with each other. This coordination should help eliminate gaps between agencies and ensure that projects proceed with proper permitting and oversight.

The form was developed over a one-year period by ABAG and the San Francisco Estuary Project (SFEP) with input from senior staff from the major Bay Area aquatic permitting agencies, including:

- San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission,
- San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board,
- California Department of Fish and Game,
- US Environmental Protection Agency, and
- US Army Corps of Engineers

### Washington State Project Model

The San Francisco Bay Area's JARPA project was modeled on a similar successful project that has been in operation for the past four years in Washington State. Hundreds of small projects, like single family docks, bulkheads, quarter acre wetland fills, have used the Washington State JARPA process. Several larger Washington projects—an airport runway, gold mining project and a large bridge crossing—have also been using JARPA.

Because of the success of the project in Washington state, the EPA approached the Bay Area Wetlands Planning Group, sponsored by California Resources Agency, about initiating a Bay Area JARPA project. The group was receptive and the EPA provided funds to ABAG and SFEP to begin work on the form.

In addition to developing the JARPA form, the EPA grant also provided the opportunity to train local agency staff who issue aquatic permits. These particular local agency staff were identified because they are largely responsible for directing homeowners to the proper regional, state and federal permitting agencies. As a result, ABAG and SFEP staff organized presentations in aquatic permitting for over 150 local personnel. The training provided information on the mandates of aquatic permitting agencies and how the JARPA form would work in the permitting process.

Local agency staff are now able to download copies of the JARPA form and instructions on our website (<http://www.abag.ca.gov/bayarea/sfep/projects/JARPA/JARPA.html>). They also have the ability to print copies of the form and place them at one-stop permitting centers or their planning and building departments. Homeowners may also be referred to the website to download the form themselves.

### Next Step: JARPA Permit Center

ABAG and SFEP were recently notified that JARPA received another two-year Wetlands Program Grant from

*continued on page 4*

## TASK FORCE HELPS LOCAL AGENCIES FIGHT DIOXINS

City and county governments around the Bay Area have adopted resolutions calling for the elimination of dioxin compounds.\* To meet the challenge of these local resolutions, a task force of local government agencies was established at ABAG. This Bay Area Dioxins Task Force has begun the process of compiling how-to information for government agencies wishing to implement dioxins pollution prevention measures. Modestly funded by participating agencies, the task force is also seeking additional funding from US EPA under several grant programs.

The main goals of the Bay Area Dioxins Task Force are:

- Pool local governments' knowledge and resources to study the problems of dioxins and recommend possible solutions or actions for local governments around the San Francisco Bay
- Coordinate efforts with state, federal and regional agencies working on dioxins pollution
- Conduct public outreach events to community groups and the general public regarding new information on dioxins research and/or control measures

### Background on Dioxins

"Dioxins" is a general term that describes a group of hundreds of chemicals that are highly persistent in the environment. They are formed as an unintentional by-product of many industrial processes involving chlorine, such as waste incineration, chemical and pesticide manufacturing and pulp and paper bleaching.

\* Since 1999, the City and County of San Francisco, County of Marin, and Cities of Oakland and Berkeley, and the Port of Oakland and ABAG have passed dioxins resolutions. The Palo Alto City Council is scheduled to discuss the issue in May.

The most toxic dioxin compound is 2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin, or TCDD. In fact, the toxicity of other dioxins and chemicals, like PCBs, that act like dioxin are measured in relation to TCDD. Concern over the presence of dioxins in the San Francisco Bay has grown steadily since the early 1990s, especially because dioxins are believed to cause cancer in humans and to weaken the immune system. There is also concern that dioxins interfere with the endocrine system (which is responsible for making hormones needed to regulate bodily functions, including sexual development and fertility).

In 1994, the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) issued a public health advisory regarding the presence of pollutants, including dioxins, in fish. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) placed dioxins on the list of pollutants designated as impairing San Francisco Bay following the National Dioxins Reassessment process. In 1997, the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, in conjunction with the EPA, OEHHA, and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, held a workshop to review dioxins health issues and specifically to examine sources of dioxins releases into San Francisco Bay.

*For more information on the task force, contact Jennifer Krebs, Senior Environmental Planner at 510-464-7977 or e-mail [jenniferk@abag.ca.gov](mailto:jenniferk@abag.ca.gov).*

### JARPA – continued from page 3

the EPA to establish a JARPA permit center. A major component of this effort will be to assist individual permit applicants who wish to use the JARPA form for their project. Applicants will be provided information on best management practices and other strategies to minimize or mitigate project impacts on the environment. The training of local permitting agency staff will continue under the new grant. Additionally, permit center

staff and participating regulatory agencies will "test pilot" permitting under JARPA and modify the form as needed.

*For more information, or to arrange training for your agency staff on JARPA and aquatic permitting, please contact Jennifer Krebs at 510-464-7977 or e-mail [jenniferk@abag.ca.gov](mailto:jenniferk@abag.ca.gov) or Carol Thornton at 510-622-2419 or e-mail [CarolT@abag.ca.gov](mailto:CarolT@abag.ca.gov).*



## NINE NEW BAY TRAIL PROJECTS FUNDED

UPDATE ON THE 1999-2000 REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The San Francisco Bay Trail Project marches closer to completion with recent funding approval for nine new projects around the region. On April 27, 2000, the State Coastal Conservancy Board granted funding authorization totaling \$1.2 million for nine Phase 1 projects, which include six construction and three feasibility studies. This funding is a part of the \$2.5 million State-funded competitive grant program, that was designed to speed development of the 400-mile Bay Trail, and is being administered by the San Francisco Bay Trail Project.

The approved projects include a variety of Bay Trail extensions for the cities of **San Rafael**, **Sunnyvale**, **Richmond**; East Bay Regional Park District; **Santa Clara County**, and the Port of Oakland. The City of San Rafael through a public-private partnership proposes to construct the Shoreline Park "Green," 1000 linear feet of Bay Trail in Shoreline Park which will include an asphalt

pedestrian and bicycle path, a gravel jogging path and a landscaped park. The City of Sunnyvale plans to provide access to one mile of new Bay Trail, which will serve as an extension for the well used recreation and transportation corridor. This Sunnyvale Bay Trail-Lockheed Reach will connect the popular Sunnyvale Baylands Park and provide new access to Lockheed property.

The grant award will contribute to the construction of a new boardwalk in the former marina basin of Alviso Marina County Park Trail, as part of Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation master plan for development and improvements. The grant will help the Port of **Oakland** construct 1.1 miles of Bay Trail along the outer edges of Oakland International Airport. The City of **Richmond** will facilitate the construction and improvement of 5 miles of Bay Trail from Marina Bay Harbor to Wildcat

Creek, and a spur trail to Miller-Knox Regional Shoreline. East Bay Regional Park District and the cities of **Pinole** and **Hercules** will collaborate to construct a half-mile segment of new Bay Trail linking two regional parks along the Bay and linking downtown Pinole to the waterfront.

Three of the nine approved projects are funding for planning/feasibility studies. The City of **Mountain View** is looking to complete a planning study for a 0.75-mile extension of the Bay Trail across the northern end of Moffett Field. The City of **American Canyon** will commence a trail alignment and planning study for 2.7 miles of Bay Trail, looking for an alternative to the current alignment along Highway 29. The City of **San Leandro** will commence a planning study for a 300-foot bicycle/pedestrian bridge across a slough north of Oyster Bay Regional Shoreline and a 600-foot bicycle/pedestrian path north of the bridge.



*San Rafael's Shoreline Park*

In addition, several other projects have been recommended for Phase 2 funding for Fall of 2000, once the necessary environmental review, final design, or other "readiness" factors can be assured. All of these projects have fulfilled the criteria established by the San Francisco Bay Trail Grant Program, which include constructing high priority, ready-to-build segments or overcoming long-standing obstacles to trail development. There was also emphasis on developing creative solutions and establishing local and in-kind funding matches and new partnerships, while employing the California Conservation Corps whenever possible to build, landscape and maintain the trail. The remaining funds available for grants are expected to be awarded later this year.

For more information, contact Janet McBride, project manager of the Bay Trail Project, at 510/ 464-7935.

## CENSUS NEWS TO CELEBRATE:

65% INITIAL RESPONSE RATE NATIONALLY – CALIFORNIA RANKED IN THE TOP 12

**D**r. Kenneth Prewitt, Census Bureau Director, announced that 65% of 120 million households in America have returned their census forms as of April 19. This response rate has exceeded the expectations of the Census Bureau. Prewitt credited this success to the 100,000 census partners for promoting census taking as a serious civic event; these partners include thousands of mayors, county commissioners, teachers, community advocates, houses of worship, and other local government, civic and business leaders.

California's response rate was 68%, better than the national average and ranking it in the top twelve in response rate. Lt. Governor Cruz Bustamante, who is a member of the U.S. Census Monitoring Board, commented that the 25 million the state had committed to census outreach has already paid dividends in boosting it above the national average.

In most cases, Bay area counties have even exceeded these numbers. Contra Costa and San Mateo Counties are leading with 72% households returning their census form. Santa Clara County has come in with a 71% initial response and Marin County with 70%. Napa, Solano and Sonoma Counties have logged in with 69% household response; Alameda County is close behind at 68%. San Francisco County has been trailing with a 64% response rate.

Individual Bay area cities have logged in very high rates of returns. For example, only 10 cities within the 101 Bay area cities had census response rates below the national response rate of 65%. These cities include San

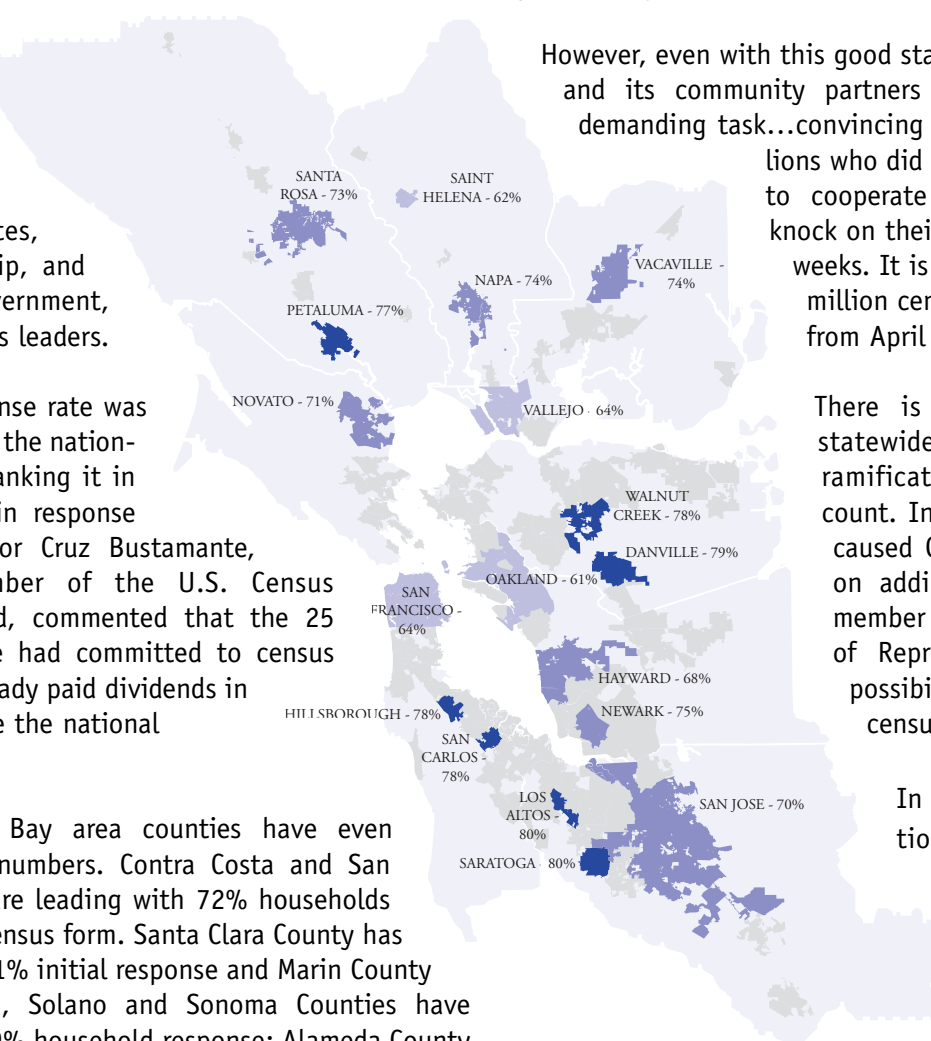
Francisco at 64%, Oakland at 61% of households returning census forms. Piedmont, Moraga and Orinda have a response rate of 81%, Los Altos and Saratoga has 80%, with Danville and Lafayette just behind with 79%. It has also been observed that cities with a low rate of response last census are exceeding the response rate goals set by the national Census Bureau.

However, even with this good start, the Census Bureau and its community partners face an even more demanding task...convincing the millions and millions who did not return their forms to cooperate when census-takers knock on their doors in the coming weeks. It is estimated that a half million census takers will be out from April 27 – July 7.

There is justified local and statewide concern over the ramifications of an undercount. In 1990 an undercount caused California to miss out on adding a seat to its 52 member delegation in House of Representatives and the possibility is very real this census as well.

In addition, the allocation of approximately \$185 billion in federal monies to local and state services, ranging from health care

to schools, parks and roads, is dependent on the census numbers. In San Francisco, about 21,000 people were missed during the 1990 census and it is projected that a similar undercount could mean a loss of more than \$113.5 million in federal funding from 2002 to 2012.



### Land Use and Transportation

**AB 1612** (Torlakson and Florez) Transit Assistance: Would redirect annually from the General Fund a portion of the sales tax on motor vehicle fuel. The funds would be redirected to cities and counties for transit assistance and rail services and local street and road improvements. Legislation & Governmental Organization Committee (L&GO) supports.

**AB 2033** (Torlakson) Statewide Land Inventory: Would create a statewide land inventory to be used as a planning tool by state agencies, local governments, regional transportation and land use planning agencies. The inventory would include projections and planning appropriately for growth, relative to residential, commercial and industrial development, and the preservation of open space and agricultural land. L&GO supports.

**AB 2048** (Torlakson) Jobs/Housing Balance: Would provide state fiscal incentives through a return of property tax for jurisdictions that mitigate the imbalance of jobs and housing by developing needed housing in urban job centers or attracting job centers to housing-rich communities. L&GO supports.

**AB 2054** (Torlakson) Inter-Regional Partnership Pilot Project: Would create a pilot project in the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, San Joaquin and Stanislaus with the support of ABAG, the San Joaquin Council of Government and the Stanislaus Council of Governments. The project's goal is to mitigate the jobs/housing imbalance. L&GO supports.

**SB 1333** (Sher) Abandoned Vehicle Fee: Would extend the termination date for the \$1 abandoned vehicle fee collection to fund vehicle abatement programs until January 1, 2015. L&GO supports.

**SCA 3** (Burton) Transportation Funding: Would impose for 20 years an additional state sales and use tax rate of 0.5% for the funding of transportation in a county that has adopted a transportation expenditure plan, if this measure is approved by a majority of the voters voting on the expenditure plan. L&GO supports.

### Revenue & Taxation

**AB 1784** (Lempert) Internet Tax Freedom Act: Makes permanent the current ban on the imposition of specified taxes and fees on the Internet. L&GO opposes.

**AB 1806** (Pacheco) Local Fiscal Relief: Would freeze the amount of property taxes shifted from local governments at the current levels and would provide assurances that education funding will not be reduced. L&GO supports.

**SB 1637** (Burton) ERAF Shift Limitation: Would cap the growth in the ERAF and return it to local governments in proportion to the original loss of property tax dollars when the ERAF shift was first made. L&GO supports.

### More GA Snapshots



James Kunstler  
Author, Keynote Speaker



Margie Matthews  
Councilmember,  
City of San Jose



Jim Sayer,  
Director External Affairs  
U.S. EPA

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

### May 2000

17 - 10:00 a.m.  
San Francisco Bay Trail  
Spring Board Meeting  
Fort Mason, San Francisco

12:00 Noon  
ABAG POWER  
Executive Committee Meeting  
MetroCenter, ABAG Room 106B

18 - 3:30 p.m.  
Legislative & Governmental  
Organization  
MetroCenter, ABAG Room 106B

5:00 p.m.  
Finance & Personnel Committee  
MetroCenter, ABAG Room 102A

7:30 p.m.  
Executive Board  
MetroCenter, Auditorium

### June 2000

7 - 1:00 p.m.  
Regional Planning Committee  
MetroCenter, Auditorium

21 - 12:00 Noon  
ABAG POWER  
Executive Committee Meeting  
MetroCenter, ABAG Room 106B

## Notable Numbers....

#1:

Bay Area in the number of patents issued throughout the country.

#1:

Bay Area in the amount of spending on bio-science research and development.

#1:

Bay Area in the concentration of technology research institutions.

#1:

Bay Area in the top-ranked graduate programs in business, engineering, law and medicine.

#2:

Bay Area in the number of Fortune 500 headquarters. (NYC is 1st)

34%:

All Venture capital in the U.S. is invested in the Bay Area.

Source: Bay Area Economic Forum



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